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Office of Information, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture.

HOW TO ATTRACT THE BIRDS OF THE NORTHWEST.

Washington, D. C. Lovers of birds in the northwestern portion of the United States who wish to attract the feathered wild creatures to live and nest about their homes may receive valuable suggestions as to methods of protection, feeding, and the provision of nesting places from Farmers' Bulletin 760, recently published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture. The publication relates to Washington, Oregon, Idaho, northern California, and the western half of Montana, and is the second of a series of bulletins suggesting methods of attracting birds in various sections of the country.

PROTECTION.

One of the first steps a householder must take if he wishes to attract feathered wild life about his place is to provide protection from natural foes, especially cats. If a complete bird sanctuary is to be created, the area set apart for this purpose should be inclosed by a vermin-proof fence which can neither be dug under nor climbed. The principal feature of such a barrier is a top curved outward or bent outward at right angles. If the construction of such a fence is impracticable, a more limited protection may be supplied by placing guards on trees to prevent cats and other animals from climbing them. Sheet metal cuffs, completely encircling the tree, or cones of like material, fitting tightly at the upper edge and flaring downward, will serve the purpose.

Another essential is to furnish breeding places. Close-growing shrubs make excellent sites for nests. They should be trimmed back severely when young to produce numerous crotches. Bird houses also should be placed about the home for the species which will use such nesting places, but care should be taken that too many such houses are not furnished. As a rule, birds do not like being crowded. If breeding places are to be provided for ground-nesting birds, such as bobolinks, meadow larks, and bobwhites, grass should be allowed to grow thickly and long in appropriate locations.

WATER SUPPLY.

For all birds some sort of bathing and drinking pools should be furnished. These may be either on the ground or raised and may be of

pottery, stone, metal, or cement. Both the edges and bottom should be somewhat rough. The water receptacle should be shallow and should slope up gradually toward the edge.

FOOD.

The vital factor in attracting birds is the food supply. This may be furnished either by providing artificial food such as crumbs, suet, chopped nuts, and the like, or by planting trees, shrubs, and herbs which will produce fruits or seeds that the birds themselves may gather. Winter feeding is the most familiar phase of bird feeding, but there is no reason why birds should not be attracted throughout the year by a supply of food.

For artificial feeding the biologists of the U. S. Department of Agriculture suggest the use of several devices. A food shelf^{may be} placed against the side of the house near a window, or a food tray may be fixed to the top of a post. An excellent food receptacle may be made by cutting a hole in a coconut and stuffing the shell full of chopped suet and nuts or some other food mixture. The shell can be hung from a limb. Holes bored in pieces of thick lumber may be used instead of a cavity in a coconut. Feeding hoppers like those used for poultry may be employed for birds on food shelves or on the ground. A wooden house open on one side, mounted on a pivot, and provided with vanes to keep the open side away from the wind also may be used as a feeding place.

NATURAL FEEDING.

If it is desired to feed the birds naturally, there are a number of plants that may be grown which will be ornamental and, at the same time, will furnish good provender for the feathered guests. For seed-eating birds in the Northwest the list suggested by the Department of Agriculture includes prince's feather, love-lies-bleeding, asters, Calandrinias, blessed thistle, Centaureas, California poppies, sun-flowers, tarweed, forget-me-nots, Polygonum orientale, P. sachalinense, portulaca, Silene, and sugar cane. Other seed-bearing small plants that may be grown are the various millets, Canary grass, and the various species of Pennisetum. Among the trees bearing seeds relished by birds are the alders and birches. The red-polls, siskins, and goldfinches are particularly fond of these tree seeds during the winter. Ashes and box elders furnish seed relished by evening grosbeaks, while larches

and pines and other conifers are attractive to crossbills as well as to some of the species just mentioned.

The fruit-eating birds may be attracted in great numbers by planting of fruit-bearing shrubs and trees. The best of the long-persisting fruits in the Northwest are juniper, bayberry, thorn apples and related fruits, holly, and snow-berry. A large number of other fruit-bearing plants are listed in the bulletin already mentioned, and the period of fruiting of each is shown on a chart. One of the advantages of planting wild fruit-bearing trees and shrubs, it is pointed out, is that the birds are fonder of these than of the cultivated fruits, and the latter, therefore, will be protected.

Copies of the bulletin may be had free on application to the U. S. Department of Agriculture as long as the Department's supply lasts.
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